

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A system providing information about an endoscope, comprising:

~~a history information~~ use time obtaining unit for obtaining information about a use history a use time from a use start of an endoscope until a present time of [[an]] use of the endoscope;

a number of use times obtaining unit for obtaining a number of use times from the use start of the endoscope until the present time of use of the endoscope;

an estimating unit making an estimation of a secular change in the endoscope from ~~[[its]] the use start until [[a]] the present time based on the obtained information, the information indicating a~~ the use time obtained by the use time obtaining unit and the number of use times obtained by the number of use times obtaining unit of the endoscope, and the number of occurrences of faults per unit the use time and the number of occurrences of faults per unit the number of use times of the endoscope; and

a displaying unit displaying a ratio of a result of the estimation to a degree of the secular change, which is preset for the endoscope.

2. (Original) The system according to claim 1, wherein the degree of the secular change, which is preset for the endoscope, is a degree at which maintenance is recommended to be performed for the endoscope.

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Original) The system according to claim 1, wherein the information about the use history is stored in a scope storing unit comprised by the endoscope.

5. (Original) The system according to claim 4, wherein:
the scope storing unit further stores scope identification information for identifying the endoscope; and
the system further comprises a use history storing unit storing information about a use history of each of a plurality of endoscopes in association with the scope identification information.
6. (Original) The system according to claim 1, wherein said displaying unit displays the ratio of the result of the estimation as a figure.
7. (Original) The system according to claim 1, wherein said displaying unit individually displays the ratio of the result of the estimation of a plurality of endoscopes for each of the plurality of endoscopes.
8. (Original) The system according to claim 1, wherein said displaying unit lists and displays the ratio of the result of the estimation of each of a plurality of endoscopes.
9. (Cancelled)
10. (Currently Amended) A method providing information about an endoscope, comprising:
obtaining ~~information about a use history~~ a use time from a use start of an endoscope until a present time of use of the endoscope;
obtaining a number of use times from the use start of the endoscope until the present time of use of the endoscope;
making an estimation of a secular change in the endoscope from ~~[[its]]~~ the use start until ~~[[a]]~~ the present time based on the obtained ~~information, the information indicating~~ a use time and the obtained number of use times ~~of the endoscope, and the number of~~

~~occurrences of faults per unit the use time and the number of occurrences of faults per unit the number of use times of the endoscope; and~~

displaying a ratio of a result of the estimation to a degree of the secular change, which is preset for the endoscope.

11. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium on which is recorded a program, by being executed by a computer, for causing the computer to execute a process for providing information about an endoscope, the process comprising:

~~obtaining information about a use history~~ a use time from a use start of an endoscope until a present time of use of the endoscope;

obtaining a number of use times from the use start of the endoscope until the present time of use of the endoscope;

making an estimation of a secular change in the endoscope from ~~[[its]]~~ the use start until ~~[[a]]~~ the present time based on the obtained information, ~~the information indicating a use time and the~~ obtained number of use times of the endoscope, ~~and the number of occurrences of faults per unit the use time and the number of occurrences of faults per unit the number of use times of the endoscope; and~~

displaying a ratio of a result of the estimation to a degree of the secular change, which is preset for the endoscope.

12. (Currently Amended) A computer data signal embodied in a carrier wave and representing a program, by being executed by a computer, for causing the computer to execute a process for providing information about an endoscope, the process comprising:

~~obtaining information about a use history~~ a use time from a use start of an endoscope until a present time of use of the endoscope;

obtaining a number of use times from the use start of the endoscope until the present time of use of the endoscope;

making an estimation of a secular change in the endoscope from ~~[[its]]~~ the use start until ~~[[a]]~~ the present time based on the obtained information, ~~the information indicating a use time and the~~ obtained number of use times of the endoscope, and the number of occurrences of faults per unit the use time and the number of occurrences of faults per unit the number of use times of the endoscope; and

displaying a ratio of a result of the estimation to a degree of the secular change, which is preset for the endoscope.

13. (Currently Amended) A system providing information about an endoscope, comprising:

~~history information~~ use time obtaining means for obtaining ~~information about a use history time from a use start of an endoscope until a present time of~~ ~~[[an]]~~ use of the endoscope;

a number of use times obtaining means for obtaining a number of use times from the use start of the endoscope until the present time of use of the endoscope;

estimating means for making an estimation of a secular change in the endoscope from ~~[[its]]~~ the use start until ~~[[a]]~~ the present time based on the ~~obtained information, the information indicating a use time~~ obtained by the use time obtaining means and the number of use times obtained by the number of use times obtaining unit of the endoscope, ~~and the number of occurrences of faults per unit the use time and the number of occurrences of faults per unit the number of use times of the endoscope;~~ and

displaying means for displaying a ratio of a result of the estimation to a degree of the secular change, which is preset for the endoscope.